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ABSTRACT

Sets of values that affect higher education are discussed: social justice, competence, liberty, and loyalty. Social justice pertains to issues of equality and equity. Beyond access to education the interest in justice for students appears as a demand for uniform standards across a system. In addition, personnel and whole enterprises steadily pursue equitable treatment. The call for competence comes in many ways: the work of academic individuals and groups, the quality of students at entry and exit, and the effectiveness of institutions and systems. A third set of values that affect systems of higher education links together choice, initiative, innovation, criticism, and variety; and the central idea in this complex is liberty. Departmental groups seek self-determination within the university, and the university presses for autonomy from the state and outside groups. This set of values includes the powerful academic ideologies of freedom of research, freedom of teaching, and freedom of learning. Loyalty values are connected with the state-university relationship. What the state wants from the higher education system may include socioeconomic relevance, defined in terms of practicality and professionalization; cultural relevance, referring to cultural revival and national identity; and political relevance, defined as good citizenship and commitment to political goals. Actions carried out on behalf of the different values often clash and necessitate accommodations that lessen conflict and allow simultaneous expression. Six ideas are offered regarding accommodation of conflict of these values. It is suggested that competence and liberty require sectors and hierarchies, while merit and choice entail differences and rankings. (SW)

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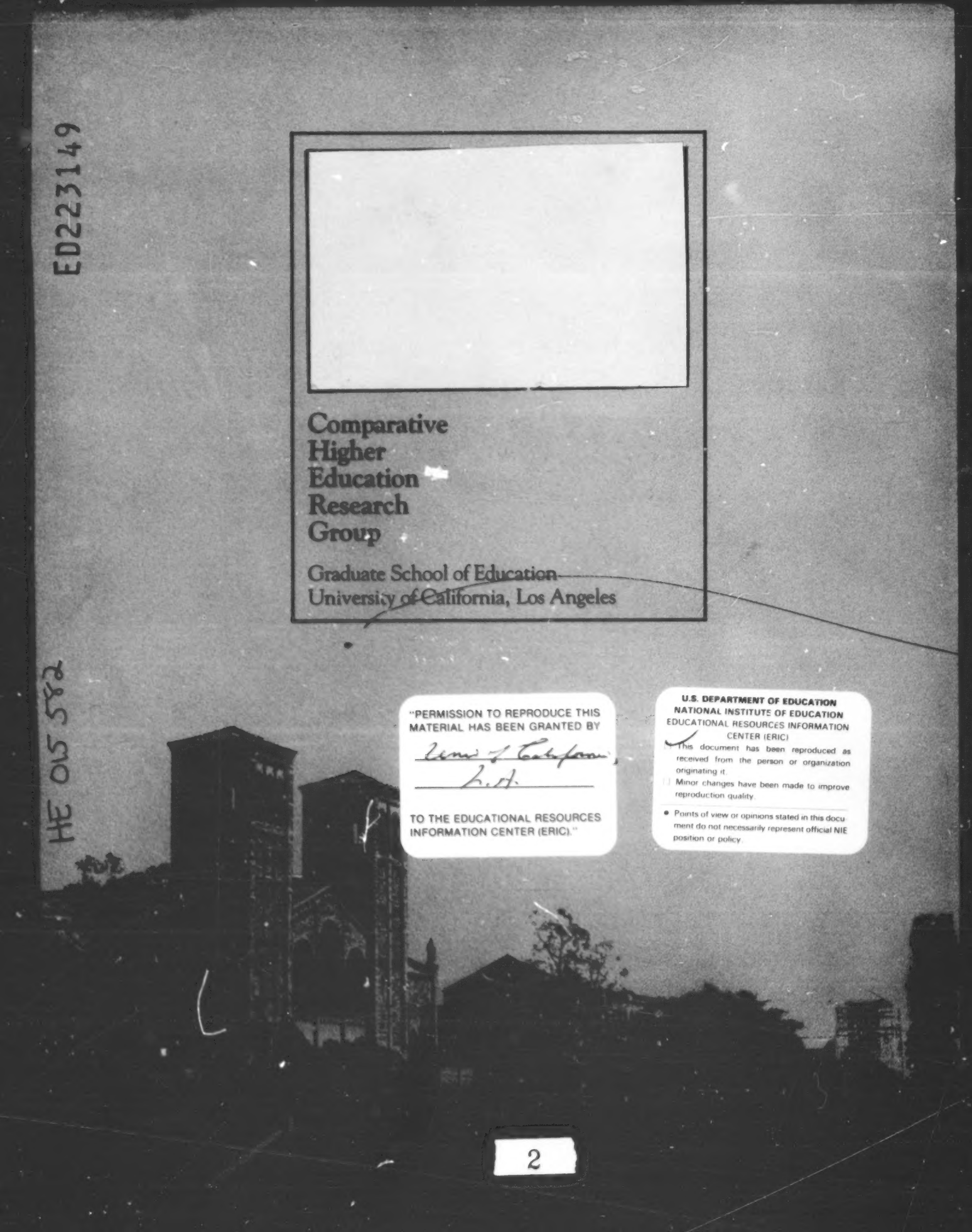

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Working Paper #1

VALUES

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September 1982

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This paper is drawn from Burton R. Clark, The Higher Education System: Academic Organization in Cross-National Perspective. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983 forthcoming. Chapter 7, "Values." The paper contains several comments that refer to materials found in earlier chapters of the longer manuscript.

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VALUES

In and around higher education, various groups press broad values upon the system. The claims come from all sides: business executives, union leaders, church officials, minority representatives, journalists and other stray observers, spokesmen for the family. The groups increasingly articulate the primary values through government, since government is the modern sponsor and hence the crucial part of the environment within which higher education resides. Vague societal values are brought down out of the clouds of free-floating rhetoric as they are defined in the chambers of the legislature, the meeting rooms of the political parties, the hallways of the executive branch, especially the department or ministry of education, and the offices of such bodies as the superior council of public instruction, the grants committee, and the national academy of science. We no longer need to guess about which values really count, from among the laundry lists presented in polls and textbooks, nor turn to philosopher-kings for new statements on essence and eternal truth, as we observe the values expressed by powerful groups as they act out their interests in and around the system.

Cross-national comparison helps immensely in identifying basic values and their transformations into pressing interests, since we can thereby note underlying issues that key actors seem to face in common across many countries, even as they do so in different degree and in situations that dictate dissimilar responses. Any given country may also understate a particular value, at least for a time, thereby submerging what others more clearly project. Nations make major blunders in higher education as they ignore certain primary values while concentrating on others. They may swing in their efforts from one pole to another. An international view then supports normative postures that have some warrant in observed national experiences. We can advise the modern state, especially when its current commitments overlook what is obvious elsewhere.

THE BASIC VALUES

Three basic sets of values are inescapable in the expectations of attentive publics in the modern period, the interests of government officials themselves, and the attitudes of academic workers. One set may be donated as justice, a second as competence, and a third as liberty. And then there is a fourth orientation powerfully developed by government itself, that we may call loyalty. Actions carried out on behalf of these values often clash, even contradict one another, necessitating accomodations that soften conflict and allow simultaneous expression.

Social Justice

A national valuation of social justice -- fair treatment for all --

is pressed upon modern academic systems as a set of issues of equality and equity, first for students and second by faculty, other staff, enterprises, and sectors for themselves. In respect to students, equality is taken to consist, in ascending order of stringency, of equality of opportunity in the sense of access, equality of opportunity in the sense of treatment once admitted, and equality of outcome or reward. These broad conceptions of equality are variously defined, with significant effects. It is one thing to hold to a strict definition of equality of access whereby entry is determined by the academic qualification of the individual without regard to such "extraneous" characteristics as race, class, creed, or political affiliation, and quite another to define equality of access in a looser, more populist fashion as the open door for all, subordinating criteria of merit as defined by academic achievement. Systems that profess open access but find only a third or less of their youth "qualified for higher education" clearly are using the first interpretation. The systems of Great Britain and nearly all of the European continent, and indeed most of the world, remain in this category, even as they expand many fold from the time when only several per cent of the population entered and even as an open-door concept becomes rhetoric and policy. "Open door" is taken to mean entry for all those who meet certain qualifications exacted by secondary schools, or the institutions of higher education, or both. In contrast, systems that let in anyone who wants to enter are clearly using the second interpretation. Entry without particular academic merit is apparent in the U.S. system, where students entering some four-year colleges and universities are still reading at the eighth-grade

level -- products of automatic or social promotion in the lower grades -- and some students entering the most modern and open of the community colleges, as in California, are illiterate in one language and sometimes two. In lesser degree, this more open interpretation is found in the systems of countries as diverse as Japan, Canada, and Sweden -- the latter the country on the European Continent where someone who wants to go to college is most able to do so, regardless of academic background, by going to work for a few years, waiting for the age of twenty-five, and then entering under the 25-5 plan (later 25-4) established in 1977. Everywhere in democratic societies, equality of access is a strong and seemingly now-permanent value, and the trend in definition has been toward the looser form, under which virtually anyone can get in, in one way or another, at one time or another.[1] And modern authoritarian and totalitarian regimes are hardly able to permanently ignore claims for equality of access: indeed to the extent that they promise greater fairness in society, as do the more socialist ones, they emphasize this value.

Beyond access, the interest in justice for students appears as a demand for uniform standards across a system so that students in given fields will be treated equally and then given certificates of equal value. This point of view was institutionalized a long time ago in the university systems of such countries as France and Italy in which the degree is issued by the national system as a whole and not by the individual institution, backed by the claim that training has been similar in programs throughout the nation. Ironically, although equal treatment is seen in modern reform as a more stringent definition of equality than is equal access, it developed

in many systems at a time when access was sharply limited and decidedly unequal. For the few who were admitted, treatments -- programs -- were to be standardized, and rewards -- professional degrees -- were to be similar across institutions. The nationalization of systems of higher education typically entails some movement in these directions. The demand for these forms of equality also typically strengthens as access widens, with various groups seeing them as the full flowering of a true democratization. After equal access, the refrain goes, the next steps are equal treatment while in the system and equal rewards upon leaving.

Personnel and whole enterprises also steadily pursue equitable treatment, as we have frequently noted, since "have-nots" have a driving and permanent interest in parity with the "haves." Uniformity is the seemingly obvious cure, in the eyes of many professors, institutional administrators, union leaders, and central officials alike. This form of equity is expressed in official insistence on fair shares for institutions and programs as well as for individuals. Bureaucracy and democracy here converge, as stressed by Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and Lloyd I. Randolph in their study of Indian higher education."[2]

"If bureaucratic uniformity is an important aspect of the genetic imprint that was impressed on the Indian education system, democracy has served to reinforce the propensity to uniformity. Andhra officials, like officials in other states, are likely to think uniformity a self-evident virtue. The union ministry of education, in establishing a national committee to formulate a model act for all universities, reflected India's educational heritage. The committee's charge contained bureaucratic notions

that uniform rules might 'neaten up' the confusion and conflict and perhaps 'cure' the diseases that seemed to afflict academia . . . Differences suggest the possibility of privilege and invite uniformity as a possible cure."

The concept of fair share is so ubiquitous in public administration that evenhandedness or balance comes to mean that budget increases and decreases are to be shared as evenly as possible. As put by an observer of Japanese budget-making: "balancing represents avoidance of comparisons among programs and their merits by implying that simply because they are similar they should receive the same or equivalent budgets."[3] Equity is a natural concern of the bureaucrat. Thus, the claims of administrators and faculty in the polytechnic colleges of the British system for salary levels and research support on a par with those of the universities found support in the British government. In the United States, state colleges find some support in the logic of state politics and administration in their efforts not to be treated as second-best; and the lesser campuses of multi-campus state universities can find support for parity with the flagship campus. It is difficult for officials, elected or under civil service, to argue for differences in personnel treatment and rewards across as well as within categories of institutions. They can find legitimate reasons to support differences, but those reasons must then come from such other values as competence.

Bureaucratic efforts to be orderly bring together the principle of fair shares for everyone with a process of coercive comparison, whereby unequal treatments are revealed, made invidious, and leveraged by ideology and

power. Norms of impartiality and objective treatment are brought into play, whether in Japan, the United States, France, or Poland. And, critically, the placing of universities and colleges in larger systems highlights dissimilarities and magnifies their differences. If we are part of one system, how come they are getting so much more than we? Such comparisons become coercive as they become operationalized in the representation of interest within the system and the normal efforts of the various parts to obtain more resources for their work. Lower administrators and professors have a vested interest in watching what other departments, faculties, and universities are getting, and then arguing for parity whenever others get more. The have-nots have a more coercive claim in the integrated system that they be brought up to parity then they would if they were in a separate system or systems. And, under bureaucratic norms, the higher levels of the system are vulnerable to such internal demands, since fair administration means all hands should be treated equally without regard to heritage, distinctive character, accumulated pride, and personal opinion.

That administered systems are often explicitly dedicated to a general equalizing of their many parts is made particularly clear when a national system offers national degrees. Such degrees become ludicrous if the programs of study and the standards of passage are markedly dissimilar. "The state" is vouching for the preparation, certifying that the many graduates of the many insitutions have met common standards. The nationalized mode is one in which central administration works over decades to honor such commitments by spreading thousands of administrative categories across institutions.

Competence

A second powerful set of values emphasizes competence. So many social groups need a capable system of higher education, one effectively organized to produce, criticize, and distribute knowledge, one that can send forth, in a reliable stream, people well-prepared for occupational performance and civil life. The state needs qualified people, preferably outstanding ones, as do the professions and private firms. Everywhere there is talk about improving or maintaining the quality of education overall, or in certain fields that appear deficient or are connected to a deepening national need, in, for example, economic analysis or military preparation. The true believers in "excellence" have no trouble in presenting dramatic arguments. When you are wheeled into the operating room, do you want an incompetent surgeon behind the knife? It is widely deemed inadvisable to become seriously ill in countries that have low quality medical education. Or, if our planners must be tutored in the dismal science of economics, why should we allow them to receive admittedly mediocre instruction? If they got the best, the argument goes, we could at least reduce the probability of grand mistakes in national policy. Or, why is it necessary for our otherwise advanced nation to remain on the periphery in one scientific field after another? -- an argument heard even in technologically-advanced Japan as critics castigate the country for a tradition of imitating rather than inventing and blame the academic system for not producing more Nobel prize winners.[4] The preference for competence comes in so many sizes and shapes: the work of academic individuals and groups; the quality of students at entry and exit; the effectiveness of institutions and systems; general education, professional preparation,

research, criticism - and even competence in achieving social justice. And as within any other broad set of values, internal contradictions will abound: to be very good at one thing means a concentration in it that courts weak capacity to do well in other endeavors.

Academics themselves often root their own individual and group self-interest in quality of performance, since so many of them belong to fields within which judgements on capability are made across the borders of institutions and, even, as we have seen, across national systems. The more scientific the discipline, the more do those within it judge virtue on the basis of international standards. The status-award systems of most individual disciplines and professions use quality as an important criterion to the point where perceived competence dominates over positional power e.g., a brilliant assistant professor is "better" than a mediocre full professor. A unified academic profession may also perform this way across much if not all of a national system. Great Britain is the foremost case of quality control by peer surveillance: the practice of external examiners means that professors of different institutions test one another's students and thereby indirectly but immediately evaluate the quality of one another's performance. This procedure encourages critical comment, much of it informal and oblique, about the teaching as well as the research of others. The contrast is most noticeable with the U.S. system, which, lacking similar peer surveillance of curricula and student performance, has never been able to judge teaching across institutions the way it does research. Perhaps the most important way to improve teaching competence in large systems is to concentrate on practices that entail peer intrusion,

lifting the veils that normally shroud the teaching behavior of individual professors and departments. Peer witnessing can enter where political and bureaucratic surveillance dare not, ought not, tread because it is self-defeating.

Basic to competence is the robust fact that fields of study are structures of knowledge that have to be mastered by those who teach and those who learn. The general framework of education cannot take any shape at all that will fit other values but must be constrained by the relatively fixed forms constructed in the many fields as ways of organizing knowledge.[5] There is science, mathematics, and languages; grammar, logic, induction and deduction. So-called soft subjects such as history are still complex, sufficiently pyramidal and sequential that those who would be called competent must work their way from lower to higher levels of understanding, from a superficial to a genuine grasp. Mastery of subject-matter and related analytical skills is an inescapable aspect of formal learning, one not likely to be overlooked by all observers all the time even if some groups or states for awhile pretend otherwise. Nations that damp their interest in competence while attending to other values, or through neglect, are forced in time to turn around and face it. For example, China attempted to give low priority to academic competence during the period known as the Cultural Revolution, as reflected in the practice of forcing professors and students to spend large blocs of time in the rice fields or in some other way of participating in the work of the poorly educated masses.[6] But, at the end of the 1970s, with much fanfare, the public policies and some of the relevant practices of the central regime swung back toward a posture that would allow professors and

students to concentrate on what they know most intimately and are able to do best.

It is possible to make the pursuit of excellence into a lethal habit, whether in research on human subjects, or the discovery of more ways of mass destruction, or the emphasis on grades and credentials that leads to mental breakdown and suicide in young people. High concentration on competence in any one field or institution or system has its costs. Perhaps now most common among the costs observed and heartily disliked by many is a certain lack of democracy. Whenever there are centers of excellence, a few are chosen and the many left out. The exclusion stimulates a counter-argument that there should be a democratization of knowledge: if knowledge is power and it is concentrated, more effort should be made to scatter it. Then, too, the pursuit of self-interest on the part of competent specialist groups may or may not serve the general welfare. "Elite functions" are necessary but they will always be in tension with mass participation and certain democratic ideals.

Liberty

A third set of values that play upon systems of higher education links together choice, initiative, innovation, criticism, and variety. The central idea in this complex is liberty, connecting to traditional values expressed in Western political thought and emphasizing freedom of action as the basic condition for exercising choice, encouraging initiative, engaging in innovative behavior, sustaining criticism, and inducing variety. Liberties are sought by groups and institutions in higher education as well

as by individuals. Departmental groups seek self-determination within the university; the university presses for autonomy from the state and outside groups. The desired states of freedom are argued as a basis for wider choice in lines of action, more leeway in criticizing past and present policy, and so on, actions that in the aggregate extend variety. The sub-values of this complex interact: a variety of institutions extends the range of choice for students, teachers, and administrators alike; extension of choice on the demand side tends to lead to more innovation and variety on the supply side, as institutions respond differently to a wider set of demands and carve out different niches.

This set of values includes the powerful academic ideologies of freedom of research, freedom of teaching, and freedom of learning. Those who do research claim maximum freedom is necessary at work if they are to do their job properly and help science and scholarship to advance. Those who teach have long elaborated the notion that they must be free to say what they please without retribution if society is to benefit from self-criticism and wrongs are to be righted. Those who learn, in a variety of nations, assert individual choice in what they will study and even in what way and at what pace they will pursue learning. Freedom of the learner was given great dignity in the nineteenth-century German university, as the doctrine of Lernfreiheit -- essentially, freedom to learn -- was linked to and placed on a philosophical plane with the freedom to teach. The freedom of students to engage in social criticism and political action has had strong doctrinal support in Latin America since the 1920s, including the idea of the campus as a sanctuary for student expression. In general, freedom for one's own group is near the core of most group self-interest. Students have been no

less influenced by this value than professors, even if they are less powerfully positioned in most systems to sustain a doctrine, press their claims, and effect their hopes.

Basic to this set of values is the desire for individual self-expression, not only among academics and intellectuals but among larger proportions of the general populace. Democratic values raise expectations of individuality--freedom taken to mean more people allowed to do as they please. Economic progress lifts more people to a standard of living where time and resources are available for something beyond dawn-to-dusk labor. Rising educational levels encourage expectations about the enriched life that were formerly the province of the few. Consumers then come to education, especially higher education, with a variety of marginally differentiated hopes and desires that combine various aspects of self-development, such as increased autonomy, with occupational preparation and enhanced life chances; e.g., to be free and expert, therefore a computer consultant; to be altruistic but rich, therefore a lawyer who saves some time for helping the poor. The demands of students upon nearly all advanced higher education systems clearly have multiplied tremendously, in part because of the more heterogenous labor market into which they will later plunge, but also because the spreading valuation of individual self-expression argues against the "lock-step" of uniform programs and standard progression. Each individual can literally see higher education differently, come to it differently in preparation and personality, and ask for an individual arrangement. Linked to the desire for self-expression is a desire for variety and even for eccentricity. More people think that higher education can help them to be creative - and creative

people, in myth and in fact, have long modeled to the world how richly rewarding it is to be inconsistent and eccentric.

Loyalty

There is always a body of interests brought to bear in higher education that are centered in the operation of the state, ones bound up in the survival of regimes and the identity of nations. "Loyalty" is perhaps the best name to put on this complex that stretches from the limiting of criticism to the linking of the system to national integration. To overlook this set of values would be to avoid issues that are at the heart of the higher education question in one country or another.

Particularly poignant is the depth of the clash in values in many new underdeveloped nations that cause politicians and academics to collide head on. The academics typically wish to pursue their work in line with their own adjustments of metropole models and international standards. But the national political and bureaucratic leaders seek to build a nation by promoting a singular symbolic identity, integrating diverse tribes and factions, constructing the infrastructure essential to nationhood (such as transportation and communication networks), and delivering on promises of a better life. In addition, they often are impatient with democratic forms -- seeking them as dangerous to unity and slow in producing results -- and prefer authoritative rule for a variety of reasons. Hence, they not only expect higher education to march shoulder-to-shoulder with other branches of government in the cause of nation-building but also expect the university administrators and professors to follow the definition of nationhood, its ends

and means, decided upon by the leader and his immediate staff. The relation between higher education and government then often tilts toward domination by government. Fealty to the state looms large. It is more difficult than in advanced nations to dissociate the tasks of the university from the tasks of the state.

This set of values, like the others, has its own contradictions. What the state wants from the higher education system may be at least three different types of relevance: socioeconomic relevance defined in terms of practicality and professionalization; cultural relevance, referring to cultural revival and national identity; and political relevance, defined as good citizenship and commitment to political goals. The first means an emphasis on technology, natural science, and specific professional training. The second hinges on competence in the humanities and the social sciences, with a particular focus on one's own country, but allowing for freedom of inquiry and exposition in those fields. The imperative of poltical relevance places primacy upon conformity, uniformity, and discipline.[7] As noted by James A. Coleman in the case of African universities, "the ideology of relevance applied to frail new universities imposes upon them a heavy overload which is patently compounded when the demands upon them are so inherently contradictory."

Basic to the state-university relationship everywhere is the boundaries established for outspoken criticism of state actions and societal conditions. The boundaries can indeed be very wide: fools have to be suffered gladly in British academic life by state officials because there is virtually no way to get rid of them. No direct orders can be given to block employment

or disbar promotion or restrict salary. No leverage against the employing institution is available for its "mistaken" toleration. The boundaries can also vary markedly within a single system, in line with its diversity. In the U.S., toleration varies by state -- greater in New York than in Mississippi; by level -- greater in universities than in community colleges; by degree of public support -- greater in private universities than in public; and by institutional quality -- greater in excellent liberal arts than in mediocre ones.

The limits on criticism can also be especially wide where sharp criticism of government and society has become a way of life in higher education institutions -- the many countries, advanced and developing, where university and government exist virtually as two different cultures and students expect both to be critical and to play out their personality development in politics. Criticizing and struggling against the government is a way of life in faculty and student subcultures in Italy and France, as it has been in such Latin American countries as Mexico, Chile, and Argentina whenever the government is something less than harshly authoritarian. In the many Latin countries, the posture of criticism, of course, is a dangerous game -- often more persistent, more strident, more violent than that found elsewhere but then subject to a crackdown by the state and a severe tightening of the limits of expression when a hostile regime comes to power, often by coup, or when under a benign regime state officials feel pushed too far.

Finally, the wide boundaries for criticism can contract sharply when authoritarian regimes come to power and act vigorously to stay the flow of critical comment. And narrow boundaries are institutionalized as one-party

regimes remain in power and have the will and the means to define opposition as illegitimate and even illegal. Hence, in the world-wide picture, loyalty and subservience to the will of the state are primary values even if they do not appear on the front of the stage in Sweden or Britain, Japan or the United States. They are prominent in most new nations in Asia and Africa and in authoritarian states, whether East or West, North or South. And that is a very large share of the world.

CONFLICT AND ACCOMMODATION

Any sensible administrator asked to directly confront and reconcile these four orientations would undoubtedly seek other employment. Fortunately for officials, the system, not particular individuals, does most of the work of reconciliation. And system accommodation proceeds largely by indirection and delayed interaction -- by analogy, more in line with the urgings of Nicolo Machiavelli to temporize,[8] than with the injunctions of those management theorists who would have us clarify goals, order priorities, and implement objectives, all by five o'clock. In higher education, any major enterprise is a compromise of conflicting values, and system organization is compromise written large. But some organizers are poor compromisers, more often for reasons of ideology than intelligence. System compromising can be badly done, as certain values become set in the concrete of position and power and then deny an adequate realization of other ends.

The conflicting values press behavior in contradictory directions and encourage antithetical forms and procedures. The value of social justice presses toward open-door admission, mass passage, and uniform graduation. But

the interest in competence everywhere argues for selection at the outset, a willingness to fail and weed out, and for graded certification that will label some persons as more capable than others. The clash between equity and excellence on the issues of entry and certification has been widely noted in educational debate during the decades since World War II, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. The problem is found in Communist as well as democratic nations. Educational policy in the U.S.S.R. has vacillated between emphasizing admission based on performance and admission based on social status; i.e., preference given to working class and peasant youth. The result has been that "the quality of graduates has declined whenever social status has been the major criterion, but has increased whenever performance has been stressed." One value or the other had to give, or, a compromise might evolve:[9]

"The current situation may be seen as representing a compromise between ideological commitment to equality of opportunity and the necessity of meeting the skill needs of an increasingly complex economy. It is clear that in spite of recent reforms aimed at increasing the enrollment of working class and peasant youth in institutes and universities, the regime is very reluctant to give much weight to nonperformance criteria, and hence the overall impact of the reforms has been small. The manner in which the reforms have been implemented also indicates that educators are themselves reluctant to forego universalistic criteria." Similarly in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany): "the attempt to proletarianize DDR education has competed with the desire to recruit the most gifted students wherever they are found and to train them so that they are able to serve DDR industry in

the most productive way possible...a victory of dogma over pragmatism... is apt to be brief and ineffectual."[10]

Less noted in both policy deliberations and research is how liberty enters the fray, playing at times against both equity and competence. For equity, fair shares is the name of the game and therefore procedures must be set that apply across the board. The competence camp also presses for uniform arrangement, generally called standards--well-constructed barriers to entry, required sequences of courses and examinations for passage, and quality controls on certification. But liberty is contrary to both, pressing away from both fair shares and standardized forms and toward a maximizing of choice and a celebration of variety. Under full sail, liberty means autonomous faculty individuals acting with little regard for group norms, and individual students seeking individualized programs of study with little worry for common standards. Institutional liberty carries with it the likelihood that institutions will vary all over the map in what they do, including the marketing of shoddy goods to uninformed customers in the soft underbelly of a diverse system. Those who want to insure competence by measuring individuals against norms and standards obstruct such free choice and institutional self-determination. In turn, liberties can clearly be diminished by equity-induced uniformities despite the general hope that greater justice will bring more opportunity and choice. For example, a research assessment of widened admission to higher education in Sweden by means of the much-acclaimed 25/5 scheme pointed out that "the strivings after fairness have resulted in its opposite: owing to excessively complicated rules and a gigantic central admission procedure the individual's possibility of asserting himself has suffered. Moreover, the

system may disfavor applicants with unusual qualifications, social handicaps or the like."[11] A generalized demand for fairness and equality in the Swedish case has led to increased bureaucratization and centralization which in turn dimished individual choice. It also lessened the fairness that comes from taking unusual qualifications or disadvantages into account. Judging individuals by criteria plugged into a central computer, as newly done in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1970s, cannot help but have mixed effects in improving individual choice and freedom to act.

Loyalty often conflicts straightaway with all three of the other values, subordinating justice, competence, and liberty in the name of a single higher good. When regimes are preoccupied with loyalty of faculty and students, little heed is given to equal treatment or competent training or freedom of choice.

Without doubt the structure of a higher education system must be full of contradictions, inconsistencies, and compromises if it is to express effectively these four disparate primary values. As systems modernize, as they move from less to more accessible education, they widen and deepen their elemental strains and dilemmas by necessarily having to attempt to significantly embody these values. Each system must do so with forms and practices, institutionalized in earlier decades, they are interlocked with each other as well as with various structures in the larger society. Thus, post-1980, we need not wonder why modern systems of higher education should exhibit a bewildering mixture of the open and the closed, the elitist and the democratic, the flexible and the rigid, the traditional and the modern.

But all is not hopeless chaos. There are broad system arrangements that seem to reconcile these values better than do others. We can assess how conflict among such fundamental interests is structurally abated. Although systematic inquiry into such matters has hardly begun, six ideas deserve the light of day.

Idea One: Conflict among such basic values in higher education is accommodated better by diverse than by simple structures. The more diverse national systems are more capable of reconciliation than the simple ones. Systems are pushed toward diversity by multiple values. A composite of unlike segments and procedures: (a) permits better immediate response to different known demands: (b) allows varied later adjustment to the unknown and unanticipated; and (c) provides a more ambiguous total space within which conflicting actions taken in the name of justice, competence, liberty and loyalty can be played out. The sunk costs of each of the values are not so directly challenged as the true believers of each value get at least some territory of their own, are able to work their way around others, and find it difficult to determine who is doing what to whom. Those who are capable of holding several values in the mind at the same time find some structural supports for each and maneuver by shifting priorities over time.

We have mapped the basic horizontal and vertical dimensions on which the needed differentiation occurs. Within their institutions, systems can and do generate more fields and programs side by side at any level of training and more levels arranged in a progression of increasingly advanced tiers. Among their institutions, systems can and do proliferate institutional

types, arrange the types in functional and status hierarchies, and make permeable the boundaries between the sectors so that students can move from one to another in search of different types and levels of training. Diversification is the key to how higher education systems effect compromises among a plurality of insistent values. Simplicity demands confrontation among contradictory points of view.

Idea Two: In the service of competence, the most crucial form of diversification in modern advanced systems is vertical status differentiation among institutions. A moderate degree of hierarchy allows status to be awarded to institutions and sectors on grounds of perceived quality and encourages them to compete on this basis. One might immediately object and say that competence can be better achieved by administrative controls that seek to establish minimal standards and to reward for outstanding performance. But we have seen the complexity of tasks in higher education systems and the impelling need for the many parts to be at least semi-autonomous. It becomes virtually impossible, even self-defeating, to attempt to insure competent effort in most of the system by top-down oversight, planning, and administration. Formal coordinators are in a steady state of frustration, as critics demand they move to improve the system and rulers send down commands from on high, while the levers of basic change remain remote to the touch if not hidden completely. The problem becomes sociological: namely, to find the ways to hook group and institutional self-interests to chariots of ambition. There must be something to be won by working harder to be better, by all those who man the understructure. That something is higher status and its associated rewards.

Ralf Dahrendorf has argued effectively that both options and linkages ("ligatures") are necessary to enhance the life chances of individuals.[12] Options are possibilities of choice, the alternatives of action given in social structure. Linkages, no less important, are bonds that anchor persons and their actions and give meaning to choices. Those who are socially stitched together have some basis for judging where their choices will take them and what is worth doing. Without social links, choice becomes pointless; with ligatures, choice has coordinates. Further, undergirding both choice and linkage is hope, hope proded not by utopian images but by realistic awareness that some individuals, groups, organizations or countries possess what others aspire to. Thus, status inequality makes for hope, for both individuals and institutions. Institutional hope springs from institutional differences rather than similarities.

The question of balance in hierarchial arrangements immediately occurs. The sharply peaked hierarchy that we noted in France, Britain, and Japan can isolate several institutions in elite positions and block out all others. The flat hierarchy noted as characteristic of the Italian system can block the incentives for enterprises to strive hard to better themselves. A middle-ground provides the openness and the incentives, the grounds for hope. Institutions can compete for better personnel, and hence young scholars can flow from one institution to another in search of better conditions of work. Institutions can shift their clienteles toward the higher-quality inputs of their betters. There are many reasons to worry about academic drift, but competence as it is understood in the system and society at large is not one of them. Drift is toward "better"; it is a standards-serving process because

it pursues status and status is linked to perceived standards. This is a prime reason why status hierarchies are not as bad as they are normally seen through the lens of modern interpretations of democracy. Where they do not exist, there will be strong pressure to create them in order to guarantee a bottom-up search for competence.

The importance of institutional status hierarchies in promoting competence has been stressed by "best-science" advocates. Modern science at its best requires concentration of talent and resources. It can hardly be promoted by equalizing and thereby scattering talent and funds across institutions and programs. France in the West and the Communist nations in general have tried to assist "best science" by putting it into a separate research structure -- the national-academy approach. The Federal Republic of Germany has used the many institutes of the Max Planck shelter. But if best science, best scholarship more broadly, is to have protective and supportive locations within the higher education system itself, then there must be concentrations, some favorable treatment within and especially among institutions.[13] The problem is to couple some hierarchy with some openness, pluralism, and peer review -- a problem noted in classic form by Henry A. Rowland, an American scientist and exponent of best science elitism who attempted to specify in the 1880s what needed to be done to improve the science of physics in the United States.[14] The existing system of four hundred institutions he likened to a cloud of mosquitoes: hardly any could be compared with the "great academies" found in Europe that provided "models of all that is considered excellent" and thereby stimulated physicists to their "highest effort." There had to be some concentration of

talent in physics in a few first-class univerities. Best science required an institutional pyramid, commanded at the heights by a best science elite and open to talent at the bottom. All levels of the hierarchy would need to be pluralistic, with groups of physicists divided along lines of specialty, training, and geography and having access to many journals and granting agencies. The U.S. system, especially after World War II, did indeed evolve in the direction that Rowland had advocated.

In sum: institutional hierarchy can be and often is a form of quality control. It portions out status, respect, and rewards on grounds of perceived competence, utilizing both public opinion and peer assessment. It can and often does concentrate resources efficiently for the carrying out of expensive tasks, from the forming of bureaucratic elites to the manning of research laboratories. The problem is how to thereby preserve high standards while allowing for institutional and individual mobility.

Idea Three: In the service of liberty, the most essential form of diversification is the creation and maintenance of different sectors and sub-sectors, down to the point of allowing institutions to be individually distinctive. Within the general system, enterprises need the freedom to initiate on their own and thereby choose a line of development. Much choice, we may note, can be made available within universities and colleges that are highly diverse within themselves, such as the educational city that we call the American state university. But there are limits to size and complexity of the individual enterprise that when exceeded cause severe problems of overload in work and management and confusion in organizational character. Institutions that try to do it all, replicating within their

structures all that is found within the system at large -- superinstitutions, we might call them -- suffer some of the same problems of overload and characterological confusion as persons who try to be superwomen or supermen. Critically, certain bona fide group interests will be resisted or suppressed. No matter how extensive its internal diversity, an institution will still have some dominating points of view that will cause it to handle some activities badly if not to prohibit them entirely. The classic case in one country after another in recent years has been resistance of university professors and administrators to short-cycle education and recurrent education. The resistance has a host of reasons that need not be explored here, but it has clearly weakened these forms of education. The groups that wish to carry the new values and work them up in operations need the freedom to choose for themselves. Increasingly it is necessary to divide up the work among institutions so that different units can wholeheartedly devote themselves to different tasks. Professional training at many levels, general education of different types and for different kinds of students, research of quite different complexity and ranging from the most basic to the heavily applied -- all can be assumed by different structures of support, sorted out by planning or unplanned evolution or a combination of the two.[15] Separate institutions are typically less coupled than the parts of a single organization and hence can reap the benefits of flexibility that inhere in loose coupling.[16]

Thus, a prime reason why undifferentiated national systems cannot handle modern higher education as well as complex ones is that they do not provide as much liberty, for a range of ideas, activities, and supporting groups.

Preeminently in academic systems, ideas have a right to be born, even at some inconvenience to system coordinators and their search for integration. Despite the confusion and duplication and overlap thereby produced, a vast complex of institutional types and marginally-differentiated institutions is the name of the game for liberty and innovation in modern higher education. But the problem is how to maintain a high level of institutional liberty and individual choice without limiting equality too severely and weakening standards too much. Crucial is permeable boundaries. Diversity becomes more acceptable to those with their eyes on equality if the diverse channels of participation are void of dead ends. Having second and third chances and the possibility of transferring from one sector to another, one institution to another, diminishes the disagreeable effects. Similarly, diversity and a high degree of individual choice become more acceptable to those with their eyes on competence and consumer protection if some academic surveillance, such as accreditation, operates across sectoral and institutional lines, maintaining some minimal standards and reigning in the roquish behavior on the part of institutions and their staffs that amounts to consumer fraud.

Idea Four: Justice in higher education is most effectively implemented if it is institutionally disaggregated instead of applied in a blanket fashion across a system. As we have seen, competence and liberty require sectors and hierarchies; merit and choice entail differences and rankings, unlike segments seen as relatively high and low, noble and less-noble, even as systems strain to blur the perceptions of the differences. Hence, if these two values are to be served even modestly well, system-wide equal

access, treatment and outcome are not possible.

The idea of disaggregating justice is not a popular one, since equity issues loom large on the national agenda in many countries, attracting parents, students, politicians, and administrators alike to the promise that inequities can be wiped out by sweeping measures. But system-wide attacks on equity issues in higher education have great potential for boomerang effects as they try to flatten institutional differences and to command a system to be unitary, thereby undercutting the grounds for competence and liberty. Since the system cannot be made operationally unitary and differences are maintained and enlarged, high expectations on equality are inevitably frustrated. Sooner or later, the vision of equity has to center on fairness in segments of the whole and even possibly at the level of the individual institution.

Systems may thereby help contain the self-defeating tendency of the pursuit of equality. As Ralf Dahrendorf has noted, equality has a built-in frustration effect.[17] Behind the demand for equality is the wish to extend opportunity: how can more people come to enjoy more life chances? But many life chances defy continuous extension, since to increase them past a certain point is to destroy them. The acquiring of a degree increases one's chances in life as long as the degree has some special value in the eyes of others. To be valuable, it cannot be had by all. As soon as most persons can have it, it adds little or nothing to life chances, e.g., the declining value of such degrees as the high school degree, the Associate in Arts degree, and the bachelor's degree in the American system. It is a bitter irony for those who vigorously pursue the equalization of access, treatment,

and outcome in higher education, that the end results, if achieved, would be relatively worthless. Everyone would have the same thing but be worse off. A more sophisticated concept of extension of opportunity is required, one rooted in differentiation rather than integration, pluralities rather than unities. Justice in academic systems will necessarily have to be varied and specific, attached to contexts that promote different competencies and, in their aggregate, widen the play of liberty.

Idea Five: State control of higher education works better by long-run rewards than by short-run sanctions. States can have intervention strategies that respect the peculiarities of institutions organized around multiple fields of knowledge and where the values of justice, competence, and liberty must be exercised. But governments are inclined to reach for direct controls, rules that reduce day-to-day discretion. The imagery is: do this job in the following manner, do not deviate from this procedure -- make sure every professor teaches twelve hours a week and reports periodically on how he spends his time. Negative sanctions are emphasized, generating defensive strategies by those to whom they are applied.[18] Then, too, when goals are not easily measured and compliance can only at best be partially evaluated, such sanctions soon lose effectiveness, frustrating those who try to apply them.

In contrast, governmental guidance can be effective over the long-run where governments concentrate on setting broad directions of development, maintaining the quality of the professional personnel, and supervising the system in the mediated form, previously identified, in which the balance of control shifts from government to academics at successively lower levels.

Key is the attractiveness of higher education as an area of employment -- is talent attracted or repelled? -- and the quality of professional socialization -- are controls internalized in the individual academic and the operating group that make for responsible behavior? The state can have its "accountability" in the form of general oversight alone, if professional controls within the system hold academics accountable to one another and to general norms of objectivity and fairness. Enlightened oversight is the way to go, since no matter how precisely governmental officials attempt to define objectives, the outcome will largely depend upon the cooperation of those in the system.

Idea Six: Value ambivalence in higher education is mirrored in structural ambivalence. Modern complex higher education systems are mixed in character, rather than tending to one pole or the other, e.g., public or private, equity or excellence, liberty or loyalty. Like individuals, collectivities can be fanatical for a time, but the costs of pursuing only one set of values soon becomes too high and counter-reforms set in to restore the place of other values. The inherent contradictions of these systems in effecting basic social values lead to mixed structures.

We may learn from a similar situation in health care. After noting the virtues and vices of private, public, and mixed systems of health, Aaron Wildavsky concluded that "what life has joined together no abstraction may be able to put asunder ... By the next century, we may have learned that a mixed system is bad in every respect except one -- it mirrors our ambivalence"[19] -- ambivalence over extension of treatment, equal access, high quality, more choice, professional independence, responsiveness of doctors

to patients' needs, personal control over personal costs, cost containment at the collective level, etc. No one likes mixed systems except the majority of those who participate. An all-private system makes sense on paper, especially on the notepads of economists; a fully-public one is similarly an impressive theoretical model, particularly in the minds of governmental planners. But what we get in reality are ambivalent systems that are some of each, produced by the push and pull of contradictory values and interests. And similarly for the primary values considered here. Only ambivalent structures can express the ambivalence contained in value opposition and contradiction.

Compromised systems also require modest expectations. We have seen that "failure" is often a shortfall against high expectations about how much will get done, how fast it will happen, and how superior will be the results. Many persons and groups, beginning with politicians, have a vested interest in promising large and quick results as they struggle competitively for favor in political and bureaucratic arenas. But systems that must interpret, embody, and implement a wide range of contradictory values need modest expectations on the possible realization of any one. And such realistic hope goes hand in hand with the growing uncertainty that attaches to policy and action. Organizational theory has come to emphasize the uncertainties produced within modern organizations by environments that change more rapidly than in the past. But is it not merely rapid change that is at work. It is also pressures, within and without, of heavily-bearing values that have grown more numerous. Uncertainty comes from facing equality and excellence and liberty and loyalty more fully than before. Modest expectations are an accommodation to this ambivalence of situation and response.

Notes

1. Cf. Dorotea Furth, "Selection and Equity: An International Viewpoint," pp. 259-77.

2. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and Lloyd I. Rudolph, Education and Politics in India, p. 171.

3. John Creighton Campbell, "Japanese Budget Baransu," in Modern Japanese Organization and Decision-Making, ed. Ezra F. Vogel, pp. 71-100.

4. Cf. Michio Nagai, Higher Education in Japan, Chapter 3, "The Tasks of the University."

5. Noël Annan, "Equality in the Schools," in Whatever Happened to Equality?," ed. John Vaisey, pp. 89-102. Particularly pp. 101-102.

6. John Shea, "Background Paper: Education in China," in Observations on the Relations between Education and Work in the People's Republic of China, pp. 33-47.

7. James S. Coleman, "The State and the University in the Republic of Zaire," quotation p. 29.

8. Machiavelli on reform: "I say, then, that inasmuch as it is difficult to know these evils at their first origin, owing to an illusion which all new things are apt to produce, the wiser course is to temporize with such evils when they are recognized, instead of violently attacking them; for by temporizing with them they will either die out of themselves, or at least their worst results will be long deferred." Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince and the Discourses, The Discourses, Chapter 33, p. 200. Machiavelli's point of view comes closer to the attitudes appropriate for reform in modern public administration than those which propose sweeping reform as a way of reconstructing a system from the top to the bottom.

9. T. Anthony Jones, "Modernization and Education in the U.S.S.R.," pp. 522-46. Quotations p. 536, 544.

10. Thomas A. Baylis, The Technical Intelligentsia and the East German

Elite, p. 51.

11. Lillemor Kim, "Widened Admission to Higher Education in Sweden (The 25/5 Scheme) -- A Study of the Implementation Process," In Implementation of Higher Education Reforms, ed. Ladislav Cerych and Paul Sabatier. p. 60.

12. Ralf Dahrendorf, Life Chances, Chapter 6, "Inequality, Hope, and Progress."

13. On the need for "elite" components within "mass" universities and colleges, and modern systems generally, see Martin Trow, "'Elite Higher Education': An Endangered Species?," pp. 355-76; and Clark Kerr, "Higher Education: Paradise Lost?" pp. 261-78.

14. Daniel J. Kevles, The Physicists, pp. 43-44, 375.

15. Cf. Joseph Ben-David, Centers for Learning, especially pp. 165-69, 180-82. Ben-David concluded that "the feeling of crisis and anomie that prevails in many academic circles ... derives mainly from internal causes, namely, the difficulties of systems of higher education to accomodate within their existing structures their new and extended functions." pp. 180-181.

16. For outstanding discussions of loose coupling, see Karl Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," pp. 1-19; and Howard E. Aldrich, Organizations & Environments, pp. 76-86.

17. Dahrendorf, Life Chances, p. 94, 118.

18. Guy Benveniste, "Implementation and Intervention Strategies: The Case of PL 94-142," unpublished paper, Stanford-Berkeley Seminar on Law, Governance and Education, October 1980.

19. Aaron Wildavsky, "Doing Better and Feeling Worse: The Political Pathology of Health Policy," pp. 105-23. Quotation p. 122.

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